



Montgomery County Council

For Immediate Release

December 2, 2003

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Proposes "Closing the Gap" Corps to boost childhood learning...

SILVERMAN ELECTED AS NEW PRESIDENT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

Perez to Serve as Council Vice President

Steven Silverman took office today as the new President of the Montgomery County Council, pledging action on school construction, transportation, and affordable housing and proposing creation of a County "Closing the Gap" Corps to enlist residents in helping young children learn.

Councilmember Tom Perez was elected Council Vice President.

Silverman, 49 years old, was first elected to the County Council as an at-large member in 1998 and served for the past year as Council Vice President under outgoing President Michael Subin. Silverman was previously Council President in 2002. He is chair of the Council's Planning, Housing & Economic Development Committee.

"I would like to thank my colleagues for the honor of serving as their President," said Silverman. "We have challenges ahead – in relieving traffic congestion and school overcrowding and in promoting more affordable housing for County families. We must meet those challenges head on and find the resources to move the ball forward."

Silverman also announced an initiative to engage County residents in helping County school children learn and closing the gap between those students from
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economically disadvantaged or non-English speaking households.

“We have to mobilize community forces in this County to help make sure every child learns,” said Silverman. “Let’s recruit a ‘Closing the Gap’ Corps to recruit 1500 more adults to help the individuals and groups already engaged in this practical – and moral – effort.”

Silverman, a New Hampshire native, is a graduate of American University and George Washington Law School. Prior to his election to the Council, he represented condominium and homeowners associations for 15 years, served as president of the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, and was a leader in Silver Spring redevelopment efforts. He lives in the White Oak area of Silver Spring with his wife Stefanie Weiss, communications director for Experience Corps, and their son Jordan, a 6th grader at Key Middle School.

Councilmember Tom Perez was elected by his fellow Councilmembers as Council Vice President. Perez, 41 years old, is serving his first term on the Council, having won election in November 2002 from District 5, which includes Takoma Park, Wheaton, Kensington, and parts of Silver Spring.

“I look forward to serving as Council Vice President and am honored and humbled by the support of my colleagues,” said Perez. “I look forward to tackling the tough issues that await us in the coming year.”

Perez serves as lead Councilmember on the Environment and is a member of the Transportation & Environment and Health & Human Services Committees. He is a graduate of Brown University, Harvard Law School, and the John F. Kennedy School of Government. He served in the federal government as Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights and as Director of the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Human Services. He is an Assistant Professor of Law at the University of Maryland School of Law and President of the Board of Directors of Casa of Maryland.

A first generation Dominican-American, Perez and his wife Ann Marie, a public interest lawyer, live in Takoma Park with their three children – Amalia, Susana, and Rafael.

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